

## **Dumont Shade Tree Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes**

### **Dumont Senior Center, Monday May 19<sup>th</sup>**

Sunshine Law: The Dumont Shade Tree Commission has complied with the open public meeting act, having sent notice to The Record, Ridgewood news and filed with the Municipal Clerk and posted on the Borough official bulletin Board.

**Present:** Ray Slaman, Abbie Slaman, Kathleen Sheridan-Parrish, Mike Kuhn, Sally Tayeb, Tom Fisichella, Larry Tobias.

**Guests:** Rachel Bunin, Anna Fisichella, Tara Barker

**Call to order. Larry makes a motion to start the meeting. Tom seconds. Meeting begins 7:30pm.**

Ray thanks everyone for their support. He has been appointed to the DSTC for another term. Ray also thanks everyone for all their work put into the Arbor Day Celebration. He asks if there are any comments on how the day went. Mike and Kathy bring up an idea of having a combined Arbor Day/Earth Day celebration with the Environmental Commission. Maybe we could get more participation from town residents. Anna says she brought that idea up last year and no one wanted to do it. Kathy says we are just under a year out and this gives us more time to see if there is interest and possible. Tom says there may be town groups that would want to do an Earth Day event. We could get ideas and see who is interested. Ray asks Mike to reach out to the Environmental commission. Mike will go to their meeting.

1. **The prior meeting minutes are not ready.** We will review them at the next meeting.
2. **No homeowners are present.**
3. **Arboretum**
  - a. **Maintenance, inspections, general upkeep.**-Sally wonders if we have the plastic boxes that could be put at the Arboretum with Brick order forms. Anyone at the Arboretum could take and possibly order a brick. Ray says we have the ones on a stake with a lid we might be able to use for that purpose. Ray and Mike also say we could have the QR code at the Gazebo and that could be used to bring people to the website and form. Ray asks if there is a date we should work toward for another installation of bricks. Rachel brings up reaching out to the high School to see if we would be able to put an advertisement in the graduation program. Kathy asks if Tara might be able to do anything with the group that is doing project graduation. Tara says they are mostly done at this time of year. Tara says something to think about for next year are all the groups that do Tricky Trays. She wonders if we would want to go as far as to donate bricks. Abbie says we should look into an advertisement in the programs for the music boosters, theater programs and athletics. Anna would like to have all the facts before we would vote. Ray and Tom bring up maintenance at the Arboretum. Tom states that the up keep could easily get away from us.

He says we could make up maintenance check list. It would also include vandalism. Ray asks everyone to weigh in. He thinks if the Arboretum should be checked twice a month. Anna says she is there every Monday at 1pm. Sally says as an example, I have the checklist what do I do? Tom says once a week he sends list to DPW if something needs to be done. Larry says if there is something on the list that the person assigned to do the checking can fix they should do it. If they can't do it just state it needs to be done. Sally says we need a game plan for weeding. Anna says there are too many weeds, they need to be sprayed. Mike agrees they need to be sprayed. Abbie inputs that anything done needs to be recorded so we don't overlap. Everyone should take a month. Do the check list and record what was done and what needs to be done. Sally says the weeds need a proactive plan.

**Tom proposes that everyone takes a month and that person will check on the Arboretum and do the checklist. Sally Second. Larry opposed. Everyone else votes yes. Proposal passes.**

Mike and Rachel will work on the form. On the form the arboretum could be sectioned by parking sections. Everyone will note action taken in what areas. Anna doesn't think people should take actions. Ray states that anyone who is a Shade Tree Commissioner is capable of taking action at the Arboretum. Sally likes the idea of an Arboretum map on the form. Kathy likes that idea it might help.

The months are divided as follows—

January – Tara

February – Rachel

March – Abbie

April – Tom

May – Ray

June – Sally

July – Mike

August – Kathy

September – Larry

October – Tara

November – Kathy

December – Rachel

Sally says the weed issue is something that she strongly believes we need a plan on. Tom mentions that a license is needed in order to spray. Ray says we need more research on the weed issue. Mike mentions that he has seen "weedman" working around town and wonders if the town has a contract with that service. Ray says we will do more research.

4. **Newsletter** – Rachel is hoping to get the newsletter out on July 1<sup>st</sup>. She asks that people send her photos from Arbor Day. Photos of Art and of the girl winners would be good. Ray would like

to expand the reach of the newsletter. Can we check on how many people viewed it online? Sally has an email list from her restaurant and possibly they would like the newsletter. Kathy will get the emails she has from the Art show to Mike. Anna wonders if we could sell space in the newsletter. Rachel says the newsletter is jam packed at this time.

5. **Plan for Memorial Day** – Sally says we are not having a float. We never found a small trailer that could be used with her car. Abbie has the seed packets to be distributed along the parade route. Ray says he needs to find out where to meet. We will assemble at 8:45am and the parade starts at 9:30 am. Larry will be with the Vets. Tara, Mike, Rachel, Sally, Tom, Anna and Ray will march. Kathy is not able to commit to the parade.
6. **Tree Ordinance** – Private Tree Governance – Ray states that a suggestion was made to expand the ordinance to some management of private trees. Tom says maybe for new construction there could be a formula for square footage and number of trees needed on property. Sally says historically speaking zoning rules change over time. Possibly a private tree ordinance could be tied to changes in a structure and at a time when there is an issuance of a new C of O. She says there is a bigger fear than it needs to be. Rachel feels that to tell people what to do with their private property is intrusive and that all the good we are doing will be lost. Tara says as a homeowner she would not be for it. Larry mentions if we tell people to put a tree in on their private property and then it falls on a house, how would that be dealt with. Rachel brings up possibly we could have something that protects Heritage Trees on private property. Ray brings up the idea of replacing trees that are cut down. Kathy is not for any more regulation on private property. She prefers what we have in place now with the permits. The permit process allows a friendlier education about advantage to trees on private property. She doesn't want to tell people what to do with their private property. Ray brings up our welcome wagon idea. Maybe if funds allow FOTST could offer a tree to new homeowners. Ray also tells us that the town trees that were to be planted near Wells Fargo, on one Washington and one on Madison, now only the one Madison will be planted. It is believed that the one on Washington would obstruct the light.
7. **D'Angelo's Farm discussion/DSTC official position and recommendations.** – Ray starts a discussion as to should the DSTC weigh in with a position on the sale of the D'Angelo's Farm. There is a discussion giving back ground as to zoning, open space, low income housing. Ray would like to know if DSTC should have an official position on the disposition of the DAngelos property. Kathy says it could be very simple, just state our mandate as written and then a position saying that we are concerned about what will happen with the property and hope that consideration will be given to the preservation of trees etc. Larry weighs in that our mandate expresses well our concern about trees and the environment in Dumont. Ray will write up a statement and bring it to the town council meeting tomorrow night.
8. **PSE&G Discussion** – postponed to next meeting
9. **Financial Disclosure Statement** – All Commissioners need to complete. All Commissioners have received an email and pin.

## **Regular Business**

10. **I – Tree** – Larry has two more tax blocks to figure out. Each block will have a measurement. Now we will have to get out and get the information and then get it logged in to the program.
11. **Tree Maintenance** – Tom talks about a Heritage tree on Manhattan Terrace that has a split. Rather than remove it the tree will have a cable put in.
12. **Adopt-a-tree** – We will be doing a Fall planting. Sally suggests bringing a flier when it is your month to check the Arboretum, someone might show an interest.
13. **Town Council Ordinance**-updates on permit requests- Right now it is very slow but will most likely pick up as the weather gets better. Ray notes that Bergenfield Tree Service is around town doing lots of work. He says they only take trees down, they don't do maintenance that would save a tree.
14. **Summer Schedule**- Ray proposes that we have the June or July meeting at the Gazebo. Everyone decides that June is the month for the meeting at the Gazebo. Ray says bring two chairs and a friend. Ray will notify the town and the website about the change of location.

**Tom makes a motion to close the meeting. Larry seconds. Meeting is adjourned at 9pm.**